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Brain Games

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NEBRASKA HONORS PROGRAM

CLC EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITY CLUBS

INFORMATION SHEET

Name of Club: Brain Games

Age/Grade Level: 2nd-5th grade

Number of Attendees: (ideal number) 8

Goal of the Club: (learning objectives/outcomes)

Enhance kids' strategic, social, and cognitive skills.

Resources: (Information for club provided by)

Board games, card games, pre-class articles

Content Areas: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Arts (Visual, Music, Theater & Performance)
- ☐ Literacy
- ☒ STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☒ Wellness (Physical Education, Health, Nutrition & Character Education)

Outputs or final products: (Does the club have a final product/project to showcase to community?)

No

Introducing your Club/Activities:

Our club is called “Brain Games” and is meant to challenge the participants’ cognitive skills and expand their social skills. We wanted to incorporate life lessons into our educational lesson every week during an icebreaker.

General Directions:

Every day starts off with 10 minutes of snack and discussion, which included an icebreaker question that is meant to kickstart interactions between participants. During this time, we make a connection between the lesson and everyday life.

Tips/Tricks:

Kids are more engaging when more energy is invested into the lesson and explanation

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Card Day

Name:

Length of Activity: 40 minutes

Supplies: 2 decks and cards

Directions:

Kids will engage in multiple fast-moving card games. Some involve reflexes, some involve quick-thinking, and others involve communication between partners.

Conclusion of the activity:

The kids were very energetic playing the games, and it was a good idea to switch up between games as they are quick moving and aren't supposed to last the full 40 minutes.

Parts of activity that worked:

It was successful when the kids were able to stay focused due to constant engagement in the game that requires the most attention.

Parts of activity that did not work:

It was a struggle when the kids would get worked up and would not calm down which caused them to lose focus.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Card Games pt. 2

Name:

Length of Activity: 40 minutes

Supplies: Decks of Cards

Directions: Groups of 4 switched games for the second week, kids had better understanding from week 1 of the same games.

Conclusion of the activity: Kids were more competitive and understood the concept of “losing with grace”.

Parts of activity that worked:

Kids got better understanding of fast-paced situations and worked their brains to think quickly while under a time limit.

Parts of activity that did not work:

When kids became more competitive during the second week, it became harder for them to follow rules and to keep manners.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Uno

Name:

Length of Activity: 40 minutes

Supplies: Deck of uno cards

Directions: Teach kids how to play uno and how to strategize to get rid of their cards the fastest.

Conclusion of the activity: Kids gained understanding of Uno and associated signs with numbers as they had to think quickly if each card matched.

Parts of activity that worked:

Kids stayed focused for the most part, and had fun while enhancing social skills.

Parts of activity that did not work:

Kids got side-tracked and would make up different rules, some did not understand when directions were switched.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Spicy Uno

Name:

Length of Activity: 40 minutes

Supplies: Uno Deck

Directions: Same rules apply as last week, but spicy uno adds on multiple underlying rules that will only be remembered if students listen well like: no talking when a 7 is placed, you are able to play out of turn if you have same card and number, etc.

Conclusion of the activity: This put more of a twist on uno as the kids' creativity got to come out as more rules were made up. It also helped to jog memory as there were many more rules to memorize.

Parts of activity that worked:

Kids were even more engaging than last week because of the extra twist or "spice" added onto the game

Parts of activity that did not work:

Sometimes it was a struggle to remember all the rules, especially for the younger kids, and would have been better to split up into age groups.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Speed

Name:

Length of Activity: 40 minutes

Supplies: One deck of cards for every two club members

Directions: Following the ice-breaker, divide students up into pairs. It is best to select the pairs for each of them and to not allow them to choose. If kids complain, present this as an opportunity for kids meet somebody knew and learn to play with someone they do not normally. Introduce students to the card game speed: Put 12 cards in the center in a 5-1-1-5 order and then deal 20 cards to each kid. Simultaneously, students will try and place a card on each of the piles of 1 with a card in their hands that is either ascending or descending one point. If neither player can play a card is taken from the pile of 5 of either side. The first player to get rid of all cards wins! If kids know the rules allow them to explain it to their partner and have them play "teacher." Stand near them to ensure they get the directions correctly. Weave in and out of each of the pairs and help out where needed. Remind students that the point of this activity is to be able to think quickly and play with speed. Switch up group pairings periodically to ensure that students are meeting new members

Conclusion of the activity: When 5 minutes are left ask the students to finish their last round and start cleaning up. Make sure the students clean up the cards themselves and do not just throw them down. Ask them to push in their chairs and do not let them leave until the place is properly cleaned up. Students were able to work well in pairs and could play games quicker.

Parts of activity that worked: Students were engaged and focused due to the speed aspect of the game. This game made a lot of students very competitive.

Parts of activity that did not work:

Selecting partners for kids did not go well. However, it is important that we did it. Students complained at first, but our group grew closer overall.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Cheat

Name:

Length of Activity: 40 Minutes

Supplies: 2 decks of cards

Directions: After the kids have finished their snack, and following the completion of the icebreaker (what was your favorite thing you did over spring break?), we will begin our activity. This week we are attempting to do something brand new, teach kids strategy. Up until now we have been building more basic skills, this week we teach kids how to play with strategy. To begin we will ask the students what strategy means. This will engage their minds and get them thinking about what strategy is. Next we will combine their ideas to create a simple, understandable definition of strategy that we all agree upon. Then we will ask the kids how they can apply strategy to their lives (grades, sports, etc.). At the completion of this discussion we will probe students to be thinking of one way in which they can use strategy this week.

Next we will break out into two equal groups, each led by one club leader. Club leaders will explain the basic premise of the card game “cheat”: all cards are passed out, one player begins by laying down aces face-down (next does 2s,3s,etc.), each player can choose to lie about the cards they’re placing face down but if they’re caught they have to pick up the entire deck. If a player is falsely accused then the accuser has to pick up the entire deck. The game ends when one player discards all their cards. This game will be repeated approximately 2 times in class, depending on how long each game takes. Club leaders will probe children about strategy during the game, and make sure they’re thinking about how it can be applied to their life.

Conclusion of the activity: When approximately 5 minutes are left, ask the students to clean up the cards and the space they played in. Students learned how to play with strategy.

Parts of activity that worked: Telling kids that they get to cheat in a game went very well, they got very excited to hear that.

Parts of activity that did not work:

Strategy was not easy for the kids. It pushed them to think more than normally, and some got it but many did not.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Team Sorry

Name:

Length of Activity: 40 minutes

Supplies: 2 games of sorry

Directions: Break group into groups of 4, and have each group go with a club member. Start by reading the instructions to the game Sorry with the kids and show them how to use an instruction booklet. Ask them questions to ensure that everybody has a clear understanding of the gameplay. Finally, throw in the twist: that students will be playing with the person diagonal to them. Diagonal pairs will be a team and work to win together. In order to win, teams must get their combined 8 sorry pieces into home before the other team. Team members can choose to either move their partners pawns or their opponents on their turn. Students must learn to sacrifice selfishness over the good of the team.

Conclusion of the activity: When approximately 5 minutes are left, ask the students to clean up the game and the space they played in. Students learned how to work in teams.

Parts of activity that worked:

Students who worked as a team ended up winning, while teams that worked separately and were selfish were not successful. Have a conversation with the kids after the game and ask them to explain why some teams had more success than others.

Parts of activity that did not work:

Some groups just refused to work together, and it did not work well for them, however it is an excellent teaching moment.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Back Alley Bridge

Name:

Length of Activity: 40 minutes

Supplies: 2 decks of cards

Directions: Split students into groups of four and give them a deck of cards. Remove the jokers and deal 13 cards to each player. Announce the suit of the last card to everybody, because that is important. Have the person to the left of the dealer play first by playing any card into the middle. Teams are made up of the person directly across each player. Each team competes with the other to win a trick. A trick concludes after all players lay a card. The winner is whoever has the highest card. Card order goes Ace, King, Queen, Jack, Ten, Nine, etc. Players must all play whatever suit the first player lays down if they can (if not they can play any card). The winner of the trick is the person with the highest card of the suit the first player laid down. However, the person with the highest card of the suit that was announced at the beginning of the game will automatically trump the other ones. Play until all cards are gone and count up which team won the most tricks.

Conclusion of the activity: When approximately 5 minutes are left, ask the students to clean up the game and the space they played in. Students built on their ability to work in teams and strategize.

Parts of activity that worked:

This game built on teamwork, a skill students are just now able to grasp. It also was challenging for students because there are many ways to win. It encouraged table talk, thinking ahead, communication with partners and losing with grace.

Parts of activity that did not work:

Students found it hard to pay attention after a few games.